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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a larger study that described public/private school partnerships throughout the U.S. The study described collaborations in terms of their goals, organizational structure, support, commonalities and differences, and evaluations. The present essay discusses how these partnerships provide a model for understanding what contributes to partnership success and successful characteristics of public/private school partnerships. The paper examines characteristics of corporate/school partnerships, university/school partnerships, and public/private school partnerships. It discusses how types of partnerships (cooperation, coordination, and collaboration) influenced the success of public/private partnerships. It found that highly structured collaborations contributed to a higher degree of mutuality among members. Collaborations lead to successful environments, fewer restrictions to success, and the most positive responses to restrictions. The predominant restriction to creating a successful partnership environment was the tension caused by the differences in cultural norms. The most common characteristic effective in offsetting tension created by these differences was the desire to break down pre-existing stereotypes among those coming from diverse backgrounds. Collaborations were more likely to express the desire to fell barriers and destroy myths about the other partner's environment than the other two partnership types. (Contains 25 references and 6 figures.) (RJM)

Kathleen D. Shinners, Ed.D
AERA Annual Meeting Roundtable Discussion
April 11, 2001

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Public/Private School Partnerships: What Can Be Learned From Corporate School Partnerships

This paper presents part of a larger study describing public/private school partnerships throughout the United States (Shinners, "Out" 1999). That study described collaborations in terms of their goals, organizational structure, support (financial and human), commonalities and differences, as well as how well as they are assessed. Existing university-school partnerships and corporate partnerships between and among schools were used as frames for analysis, because no significant research has been published on public/private school partnerships. The nature of the study, including lessons learned from university school partnerships relative to partnership structures, was presented at the 2000 AERA annual meeting in a roundtable session (Shinners, "Out" 2000). The characteristics of public/private school partnerships, including a description of their activities, studied was presented at the 2000 AATC annual meeting in an issues and ideas session (Shinners, "Side" 2000). This purpose of this paper is to present lessons learned from the study of school-to school partnerships, in light of corporate and university school partnerships. This paper discusses how these partnerships provided a model for understanding what contributes to partnership success, and successful characteristics of public/private school partnerships.

School Partnerships Defined

Inter-institutional activities can be varied in form from limited to intensive involvement. For example, collaborations can range from inviting a public school to use a private school's theater or athletic field to public and private schools jointly

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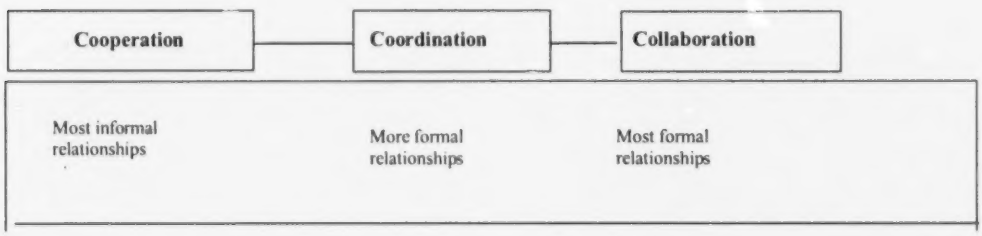
participating in a drug awareness program. Educational research is full of examples that use the word collaboration to mean a plethora of activities. Out of the Trenches, the original public/private school study, addressed this by categorizing various collaborations using the framework of Mattessich and Monsey. In this work, three categories of public and private involvement are delineated:

> 1) Cooperation: Activities "characterized by informal relationships that exist without any commonly defined mission, structure or planning effort. Information is shared as needed, and authority is retained by each organization so there is virtually no risk. Resources are separate as are rewards."
>
> 2) Coordination: Activities "characterized by more formal relationships and understanding of compatible missions. Some planning and division of roles are required, and communication channels are established. Authority still rests with the individual organizations, but there is some increased risk to all participants. Resources are available to participants and rewards are mutually acknowledged."
>
> 3) Collaboration: Activities which reflect "a more durable and pervasive relationship. Collaborations bring previously separated organizations into a new structure with full commitment to a common mission. Such relationships require comprehensive planning and well defined communications channels operating on many levels. Authority is determined by the collaborative structure. Risk is much greater because each member of the collaboration contributes its own resources and reputation. Resources are pooled or jointly secured, and the products are shared."
>
> (Mattessich and Monsey, 1992, p. 39)

Mattessich and Monsey place partnerships on a scale ranging from cooperation to collaboration as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Schema of Partnership Efforts.



The most loosely organized efforts (most tightly controlled by their respective partners) are placed on the cooperation side of the schema. While the most formal, enduring, well organized, and autonomous efforts fall under the heading of collaboration. It would be incorrect to assume that the potential for movement from least to most structured is assured, since difficulties with overcoming self-interest and arriving at mutuality among partners present real challenges. (Schlechty and Whitford, 1998)

Corporate Partnerships

Using the definition provided by Mattesich and Monsey, corporate partnerships do not appear to be collaborative in nature. Many are limited in participation and duration, rather than committing to a "more durable and pervasive relationship". Some appear to be carefully planned and have open and frequently used communication channels but others do not. (Onuska, Gordon and Jenkins 1984 and Mattesich and Monsey 1992). A number of them, however, do seem to focus on commitment to mutually held goals that will mutually benefit both partners. Central to the concept of corporate partnerships is a question about goals and gains. Corporations set goals to achieve their ends. Mutuality is the goal—each partner looks to achieve its goal (self-interest), while at the same time seeing that the interests of the other partner are met (altruistic). (Goodlad 1988, p 24). In reviewing existing private school-partnership literature, I found a somewhat surprising emphasis on organizing for mutual gain.

Corporate partnerships are interested in receiving better-prepared workers so as to see increased productivity and lower training costs. Recognizing this, they appear driven by individual goals, but there is a higher level of awareness of mutual goals and benefits to partners and others. Corporate goals seem to result from careful planning processes. Corporations are structured to set expectations and to measure them. It seems as if their partnerships with schools reflect this expectation.

Corporate-School Partnership Characteristics

A common thread among the companies and schools teaming in partnerships was the perceived need for increased efficiency in educational services spawned by the reforms urged by the report of A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy 1986). As partnerships formed, however, the general interest in educating children more efficiently grew to address more specific purposes.

Flexibility

For example, in Boston, corporate partners wanted to help schools improve student results and actually facilitated busing students to end desegregation. An Omaha school-to-work program and an employment orientation program in Cincinnati were formed to address the common problem of assumed inefficient educational practices. In reality, they came to address very specific problems existing in their localities and therefore quickly adapted to subsequent secondary purposes (Bodinger, Fleming-McCormick, Schwager, et al., 1996). Information gained from

studying existing public and private collaborative efforts, is helpful when looking at the reasons why corporations wish to partner with schools.

Mutuality

Who gains from a corporate/school partnership? One answer may be business, because corporations find better-trained, entry-level employees, which cuts their training costs and enhances productivity. A partnership can also enable a corporation to improve its image and become better understood in the community. (Onuska, Gordon and Jenkins 1984).

Schools may gain through increased support for education, increased resources and more demonstrated student success. Higher education may gain because of increased college admission and retention with better-prepared students. Parents and students stand to gain as they have a stronger voice in education efforts and more of a sense of ownership. The community gains when strong education attracts more people to an area, and the overall quality of life improves as all of these gains are felt. (Grobe 1993). When corporations offer administrative assistance, schools can run more efficiently. Students in corporate-school partnerships can learn of careers in business, as well as the skills that are required for such careers and more opportunities may develop for them. (Onuska, Gordon and Jenkins 1984).

Many examples of corporations and communities experiencing mutual gains exist. One such effort is The American Bankers Insurance Group partnership with Dade County Public Schools in Florida. The American Bankers Insurance Group initiated a program named Satellite Learning Centers, which enabled the company to open a school on its premises to be run by the Dade County Public School System. In

a program evaluation, both the schools and the insurance group were winners. Students attending the Satellite Learning Centers performed above national averages, parents were pleased because of the convenience and because of their increased ability to influence their children's' education. The American Bankers Insurance experienced higher employee productivity and improved attitudes. (Education of the Satellite Learning Centers Program: February 1991). A partnership in Omaha, Nebraska, provided a school-to-work transition program for non-college bound students which allowed them to become more skilled and competitive. Activities included job-shadowing, mentoring, a summer skills institute, and job readiness programs. As a result of the partnership, business gained better-trained workers and 60 per cent of participating companies reported that they had entry-level jobs available for participants. (Bodinger-deUriate, Fleming-McCormick, Schwater, et.al. 1996).

Corporations seek ways to attract and cultivate talent. Partnerships with schools provide a cost-effective way of doing that while encouraging young people to explore a wider range of after-school choices. The MENTOR program of New York City, established by Thomas Evans, a lawyer and chairman of the board of Teachers College, Columbia University, exposes public school students to careers in the legal profession. The program gives students hands-on experience and an exposure to the work involved. Students are paired with lawyers as mentors. Lawyers help students with their moot court competition, visit classrooms, and invite students to their firms and to observe court proceedings. Program evaluations stated that participating

students demonstrated increased interest in, and respect for, the law, and teachers noted that, in many cases attendance records improved. (Evans 1992).

Successful Elements of Corporate School Partnerships

Research on corporate-school partnerships, such as that done on university-school partnerships emphasizes the concept of mutuality and balanced levels of partners. It is true that the U.S. Department of Education suggests analyzing partnerships by measuring their level of impact on the educational system. System elements include policy, educational improvement, management, teacher training and development, and classroom and special services (Bodinger-deUriarte, Fleming-McCormick and Schwager, et.al 1996). It is also true that the Department of Educational Research and Improvement recognizes that partnerships can be analyzed by measuring the level of involvement of the partners (Grobe 1993). They suggest that involvement be seen in stages, moving from the least formal to the most formal level of engagement. The most limited participation would see a few teachers involved with some business volunteers in one activity. In a Cooperation, the Department of Education, Office of Research and Improvement, sees more communication, participation and leadership but with an unequal relationship among partners. The third level of involvement they see as Collaboration, where the partnership gets a fully independent life with top leaders engaged and support from all strata. For a collaboration to be successful, the whole company and school are involved, often in more than one program. In such a collaboration, the partners have established longer term goals, top leadership is committed, major resources from partners are allocated by them, several activities may be ongoing, and all benefit in a

partnership of equals. (Evans 1992, Grobe 1993 and Onuska, Gordon and Jenkins 1984).

In summary, those aspects that contribute to successful school partnerships are as follows:

1. commitment of resources
2. risk, mutual gains
3. balanced participation
3. commitment of top leadership
4. balanced distribution of power

All of the above seem essential to the success of corporate-school partnerships. The biggest difference between corporations and other institutions that partner with schools, including universities, is that corporations appear to be more goal-oriented, and product-driven, and they stress program evaluation more than university-school-partnerships. Their partnerships, as a result, reflect more emphasis on results with greater attention to accountability.

University-School Partnerships

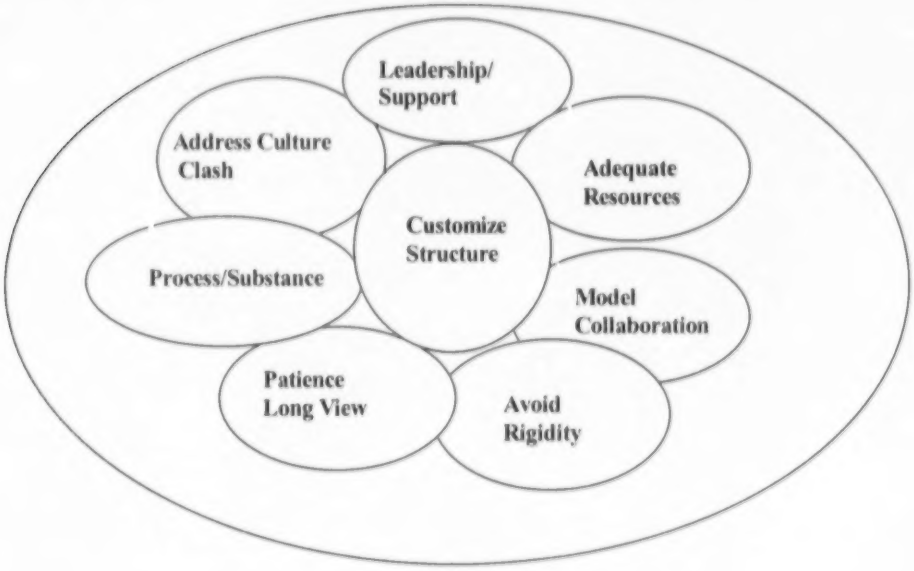
When universities collaborate with schools, they often look to find a place to seat their teacher training programs. Pursuant to that, they must fulfill their responsibilities to student teachers, help the schools perform to their highest expectations, and perform as competent collaborators who will enable other purposes to be served. For example, in the act of effective collaboration, developing curriculum and providing access to it will enable a more diverse population to be served (Goodlad, 1988, p. 27). In attempting to answer the question, why do schools partner with each other, the study examined the stated reasons for their projects and

sought to uncover secondary reasons that were made clear once the effort had begun. For example, partnerships may have originated for stated reasons (community relations), and in the process of the project, they may have developed the unexpected result of breaking down the stereotypes each school had about the other (Goodlad, 1988, pp. 22-26; 1996, pp. 229-230).

From the university experience, which contributed to the conceptual framework for the original study, attention to process and open communication lines that allow for the expectation of tension and conflict are vital to the life of a school partnership. In university-school partnerships, ways are sought to overcome fear of change and seek to create the trust necessary to forge a "symbiotic partnership" (Goodlad, 1988, pp. 4, 12, 193; 1993, pp. 24-40; Sarason, 1995).

Lessons learned from university practice provide practical suggestions for those involved in public and private partnerships to follow if they are to endure and to meet the goals they set for themselves. Goodlad (1993) sets these practices out as guidelines clearly and succinctly while reporting on the work of the 14 settings comprising the National Network of Educational Renewal. His language resonates throughout the literature on the Professional Development School (PDS) and the School-University Partnership. Figure 2 depicts the criteria for successful university practices suggested by Goodlad (1993), and shows the interrelationships among the key elements that can be learned from university-school partnerships (pp. 24-40).

Figure 2: Elements of a Successful University-School Partnership



Regarding the graph sectors, each element has a certain impact on the success of a university-school partnership. Avoiding culture clash appears to be a stated goal, and the process is sensitive to the importance of attending to the needs and organizational structure of the other partner (Clark, 1988, pp. 52-58; Goodlad, 1993, pp. 26-40; 1988, p.14). Consequently, in a successful collaboration, the process itself should be honored. Attention to process requires flexibility, taking the long view, and avoiding rigidity (Goodlad, 1993, pp. 26-40; 1988, p. 26). Given the challenges inherent in cross-cultural communication, support for the effort needs to be pervasive in the affiliated communities and strong committed leadership coming from the top of the organizations must be clearly visible. Strong leadership is also needed to ensure adequate resources, without which the effort is at risk. Hands-on leadership can also

serve as a model for the collaboration by encouraging open communication and positive interaction among members (Goodlad, 1989, p. 5; 1993, pp. 26-40; Sarason & Lorenz, 1998).

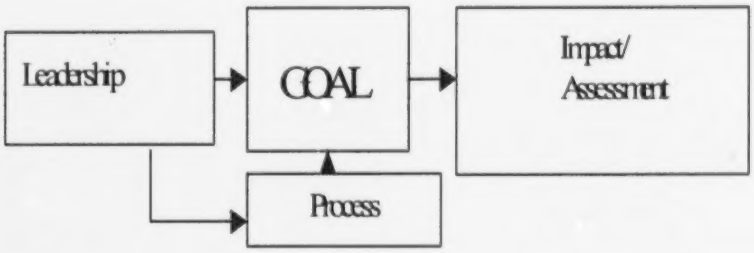
The ultimate design and structure of the project structural accommodates the criteria, as Figure 2 indicates, showing interrelating characteristics that contribute to partnership success. Structural considerations underlie the criteria by building in certain requirements of partnerships that partners need to satisfy. Setting frequency of meeting times at a rate for ensuring frequent communication, establishing a procedure that protects open communication, and training members to be patient are all strategies that help address structural differences between partner institutions. In summary, the university-partnership must look and behave like one, embodying the qualities necessary for it to endure. These qualities are used in the study to evaluate public/private-school partnership efforts (Goodlad, 1993, pp. 24-39; 1988, pp. 27-29).

Corporate/School vs University School Partnerships.

Corporate partnerships with schools have a slightly different emphasis concerning what aspects help contribute to the partnership's success. Private partnerships tend to be concerned with educational improvement. Corporate partners focus on impact and tend to expect measurable results. As in the university model, corporate partnerships need and expect top leadership of the institutions involved to show strong commitment and to promote effective communication (Grobe, 1993; Onuska, Gordon, &Jenkins, 1984). For corporations, attention to process in partnerships is less important than improving the product (less student attrition, higher grades, and student placement) (Grobe, 1993, Onuska, Gordon, & Jenkins,

1984). Corporate partnerships emphasize the need for participants in the project to maintain a clear focus, and to ensure that a sense of purpose is kept on track with careful planning. The goal of business partnerships is not to exist for themselves, but to ensure that everyone benefits; thus they, like university-school partnerships, concentrate on mutuality (Onsuka, Gordon, & Jenkins,1984). Axelrod's (1984) theory of collaboration, rooted in the theory of mutual self-interest, speaks very clearly to the organizational criteria of a successful partnership. He tell us that a partnership has the best chance of succeeding when the self-interests of each party are met. He reminds us that altruism is at risk when there is no real mutual benefit to the donor and to those who benefit (Axelrod, 1984). He believes that mutual need and shared burdens can be the most effective reasons for collaboration. Corporations often partner with schools so that they can receive better-trained workers. This does not mean that their efforts benefit the schools any less. Corporations expect that the process most natural to them, i.e., tight planning and clear expectation about results, will be essential to the success of their school partnerships. This may or may not translate well into the domain of a school day (Goodlad, 1993, pp. 24-40; Trubowitz & Longo, 1997). In summary, corporations place a high value on shared benefits and costs for partners. They consider attention to results and clear goals essential to the success of the partnership; while attention to process is important, it is less so than for university efforts. The criteria valued by corporate partnerships (see Figure 3 below) will be added to those university-school efforts and included in the analysis of public/private school partnerships. Figure 3 shows the relationship between goals and the process surrounding their emergence.

Figure 3: Goals in Relationship to Characteristics Necessary to Their Attainment



Using the university and corporate experience as models, rationale for public/private school partnerships can be scrutinized for mutuality. Are both organizations participating for individual gains alone, to perform a service, or some combination of both reasons? Is there a pattern in reasoning for forming partnerships among schools initiating partnerships? How do schools address the idea of "culture clash" in deciding to form partnerships? Are they formed to diffuse it and to break down previously held stereotypes each partner had about the other? Are the original reasons for initiating public/private school collaborations also sustaining reasons or do goals and objectives shift as the partnership evolves? These questions, emerging from the experience of universities and corporations in partnerships with schools, assist in providing a frame for the study of public/private school partnerships.

Applying the university-school model, such as the National Network for Educational Renewal Project, for example, to the study of public/private school collaboration, results in the creation of a central hypothesis to this study: that public/private school collaborations do help in breaking down barriers, destroying existing myths, and building stronger community bonds among the partnering

institutions. This hypothesis was tested by examining answers to the survey questions and categorizing responses. Discovered patterns helped to determine if public and private schools collaborate for similar primary and secondary reasons, as do universities.

Public/Private School Partnership Success.

Again, in any type of collaboration, partners must first know why they want to collaborate. They must know what they want for themselves and why collaboration will help them achieve it.

Self-interest is too powerful a motivation to overlook, so collaborative planning must include helping groups find individual gains while helping others work in their self-interest or else the collaboration will be short-lived (Axelrod, 1984). More specifically, distinct qualities emerge from university-and corporate-school partnerships that provide criteria for the study of public/private school partnerships, and so are included in this conceptual framework. These separate types of efforts serve as models that offer distinct characteristics to study which may be applied to public/private-school efforts. Further, these characteristics may be studied to see if they in fact contribute to the success of the venture, and if they can provide a basis upon which school partnerships can be seen to assess their level of success.

Criteria for Measuring Public/Private-School Collaboration Success

University-school-partnerships and corporate school partnerships reveal specific criteria by which public/private-school efforts can be studied. These include process oriented characteristics such as open, honest, and frequent communication,

built-in flexibility, heightened consciousness of potential culture clash, encouraging patience, and taking the long view. Some are material, such as attention to adequate resources. (Goodlad 1993, p. 25-29). Other important indicators of a partnership's success dealing with leadership and management are: support from top leadership, good planning and goal setting, and attention to results of the effort.(Goodlad 1993, pp. 25-29, Grobe, 93, Onuska, Gordon, & Jenkins'84.) All of these criteria will be used to understand what makes public/private school partnerships successful.

Environmental Context for Public/Private School Partnership Success

This discussion of partnership success is divided into three sections: (1) creating the environment for success, (2) recognizing conditions that restrict partnership success, and (3) determining qualities that offset resistance to partnership success. These three components create the basis for partnership success. Success is defined in this study as the ability of a partnership to endure. The rubric for grouping and analyzing levels of partnership success (looking at what qualities allow partnerships to last over time) emerged from reviewing the literature on university-school partnerships and corporate-school partnerships. The framework for analyzing partnership success assumed the following:

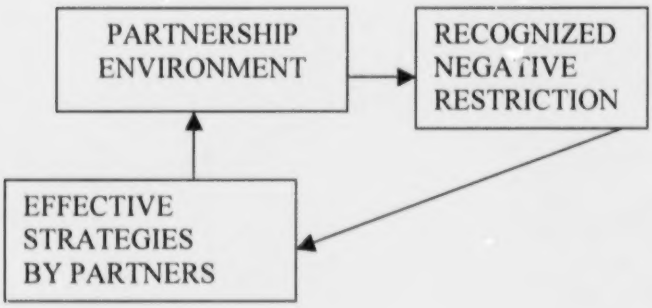
- Partners must exist in an environment that allows the effort to flourish and achieve mutuality (Goodlad, 1993, pp. 24-40; Grobe, 1993, Onuska, Gordon, & Jenkins, 1984, Slater, 1996; Trubowitz & Longo, 1997).
- Partners must recognize and be sensitive to restrictive circumstances and factors that can diminish a positive operating environment for the partnership (Goodlad,

1988, pp. 15-18; 1993, pp. 24-30; Lieberman, 1988, pp. 82-84; Sarason, 1995; Tietal, 1992, pp. 77-85, 1996, 1997, pp. 311-335).

- Partners must create strategies and behave in ways that help overcome restrictions to achieving a supportive environment for the partnership (Baldridge, 1975; Goodlad, 1996, p. 228; 1993, pp. 25-30).

Figure 4 shows the three components of a successful partnership in relation to each other.

Figure 4: Components of a Successful Partnership



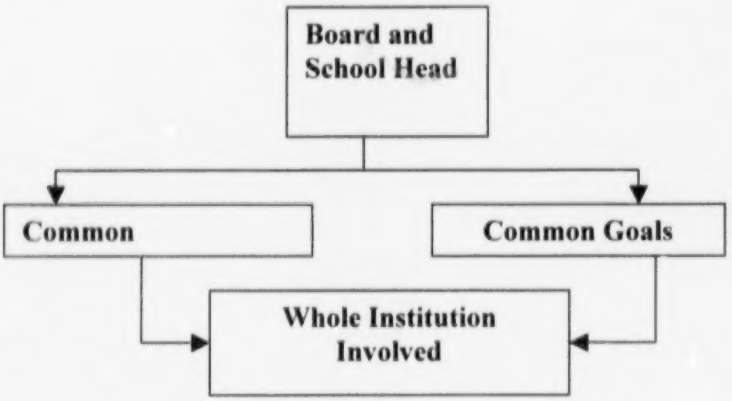
Creating the Environment for Success

As stated in the literature review, partnerships are successful when they exist for the benefit of all members. Partnerships must be a delicate balance of altruism and self-interest if they are to be successful. In order for the partnership to endure, partners must also be aware of and negotiate the need for the partner's self-interest within the partnership agreement. Such a perspective can be described as

"enlightened self-interest" on the part of the partners (Axelrod, 1984; Mattessich & Monsey, 1992; Sarason, 1995, Trubowitz, 1999). Mutual gains, risks, objectives, and resources must be considered in the planning. In this analysis, public and private school partnerships were studied to see whether they were successful in this way. At the center of successful partnerships is the concept of mutuality (Grobe, 1993, Trubowitz, 1998). A common mission of the partnership and a common vision of how it will achieve its goals are essential to its success, and public/private school partnerships are tested for common mission and vision.

Leadership of an organization must support the partnership by sharing their vision for it and by making resources available (Clark, 1988, p. 52; Evans, 1992,Goodlad, 1993, pp. 24-40; Grobe, 1993, Onuska, Gordon and Jenkins, 1984, Trubowitz & Longo, 1997). In a sense, they set the tone and must engage every branch of the organization in its aims. Top leadership, including the board and head of school, must contribute necessary elements of a successful public/private school partnership, i.e., knowledge, resources and influence over members of their entire organization. By involving the whole institution, top leadership sets the basis of common understanding about the partnership within the partner institution and common goals around the partnership, which members of the partnering institution can strive to meet. Figure 5 displays the influence that top leadership should have on involving the whole institution in meeting the goals of the partnership.

Figure 5: Environment Created by Effective Leadership



Recognizing Conditions that Can Restrict Success

As discussed in the literature review, culture-clash, turf-protection, and a lack of understanding of the other partner's environment and its needs can destroy a partnership. Attention must be paid to practical matters that can govern institutional life, such as time allocation and personnel turnover, as well as reward considerations and political pressures upon working members (Goodlad, 1993, pp. 24-40; Trubowitz, 1998). Having taken significant cultural differences into account, partners must seek to understand how they affect institutional life.

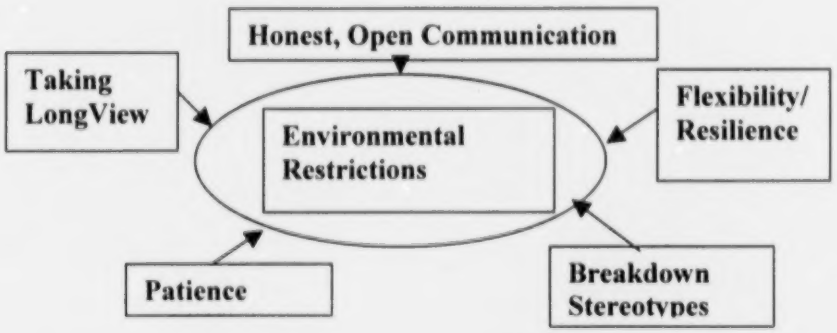
Membership Qualities that Contribute to Success

Flexibility is the key quality that members can bring to public/private school partnerships, and it is the best antidote to intractability. Patience must accompany resilience in responding to managing as well as living within a partnership (Trubowitz, 1998). Processing bad news productively is required of successful

partnership members. For example, goals must be kept in mind while responding to challenges along the way (Godinger, Fleming-McCormick, Schwager, et al., 1996, Goodlad, 1993, pp. 24-40). Realistic assessments are needed regularly to see if the partnership is on track with its goals, and these can happen only with open and honest communication

Figure 6 shows the relationship of environmental restrictions and their mitigating factors.

Figure 6: Qualities that Offset Restrictions to Successful Partnerships



Findings of Study: Out of the Trenches: When Public and Private Schools Collaborate.

Factors Contributing to Public/Private School Partnership Success.

The study found that partnership structure formed the basis for the degree of mutuality in partnerships, and that structure contributed to the degree of their success. The analysis of degrees of success achieved by public/private school partnerships was organized by categories. Elements found to be key to partnership success were organized into three major groups: (1) creating the desired environment in which

partnerships can thrive, (2) recognizing resistance points to such an environment, and (3) responding positively to the identified resistance in such a way that can reduce the identified resistance points. The three major categories mentioned above are then organized three ways, or by the type of partnership studied, i.e., Cooperations, Coordinations, and Collaborations.

Environments in Which Public/Private School Partnerships Thrive.

Effective leadership emanating from the top level of participating institutions was found to be essential to success. Clear direction in partnership created internal and external communication among members, which encouraged common understanding and goal-setting.

Cooperations. Visible support from the top leadership of the schools surveyed was noticeably absent in Cooperations. Reference was made to support from top leadership in only two of the six partnerships. There was no evidence that the whole school was involved in the partnership.

Coordinations. Coordinations were able to show only incremental improvement in their ability to demonstrate support for their efforts from the highest levels, and there was little discussion of the specific qualities of management support. As in Cooperations, there was no evidence that the whole school was involved in the partnership.

Collaborations. Collaborations were the only form of partnership to show evidence that entire schools were involved in the partnership. Half of the Collaborations demonstrated both the existence of support from top leadership and the involvement of the whole school in the project. A Shakespeare School

Collaboration credited "strong commitment by leadership; rooted in the classroom with the teachers who actually develop and run the program" with making the program successful. The public/private school administrative collaboration recalled how new administrators arriving in the area "brought new blood and a new attitude, enabling the program to happen."

Recognizing Environmental Restrictions to Partnership Success.

As discussed in the Literature Review, resistance factors were seen to affect public/private school partnership success in a way that created a negative environment. Culture clash, desire to protect what each has (turf protection), and differences between partner's environments are negative influences on public/private school partnerships.

Cooperations. No pattern of repeating restricting conditions could be found among public/private school cooperations. The notion of culture clash (existence of different cultural norms), was mentioned by only two programs.

Coordinations. These types of partnerships indicated that they recognized slightly more restricting conditions than Cooperations. There was a clear pattern to these responses. Almost half of the restrictions to success were related to the notion of "difference in cultural norms." Some of the problems cited referred to widely held notions of public/private school differences. One regional association of Independent Schools referred to the "myth that all kids couldn't interact with each other." A private school spoke of "competition and envy in the public and private establishments, along with resentment and a lack of sharing." because, "both sides are quick to criticize." The idea of socio-economic differences and a need to expose

students to different settings was a pattern in the Coordination responses. None of the other factors was seen as being nearly as important with regard to creating a negative partnership environment.

Collaborations. Public/private school collaborations, like Cooperations, witnessed fewer restrictions than Coordinations. In Collaborations, all of the restrictions discussed were related to differences in cultural norms. Respondents spoke of the need for teachers to be trained in diversity issues and to have more minority candidates in the profession of teaching, and they mentioned the territorial boundaries between the two sectors.

Positive Responses by Partners that Offset Restrictions to Success.

Patterns of behavior among partnership members were seen to influence the chances of its success positively, especially patterns that prevented tension from arising. More structure provided for more mutuality; therefore, structured relationships were important in contributing to success. In this regard, Coordinations and Collaborations had more positive responses than Cooperations. In these two types of partnerships, communication was more vital and it flowed more formally as well as informally, and more internally as well as externally. Lacking among members and partners, however, was dialogue around partnership performance in the form of an assessment tool. As a result, with only one exception, there existed no means to feed partnership performance information back to the partnership.

Cooperations. Only one Cooperation was seen to offer a positive response to negative restrictions, and it mentioned the value of the "flexibility of independent schools that helps to clear obstacles away."

Coordinations. Just as a pattern emerged among Coordinations that encountered resistance factors around differences in cultural norms, so too was there a pattern in their attempts to break down the stereotypical notions that each community had about the other. Such attempts were the most common of the positive responses found in Coordinations. In fact, the idea that "all kids couldn't interact with each other" stimulated one private school to form a professional exchange as it sought to overcome its "gold-plated school image" of elitism. Another school, recognizing the competition and envy in the public and private establishments, sought to "create an environment where each group had common goals and were not able to ignore each other." Recognizing that its students needed to experience a cultural and racial mix, another private school decided to create a program (their Coordination) that could provide them with that experience. Coordinations expressed as a common theme that the most pressing restriction to their success was tension as a result of difference in cultural norms, and that the most positive response was to work in the partnership to break down those negative stereotypes.

Collaborations. As in Coordinations, the most common positive response in Public/private School collaborations was the desire to break down stereotypes. In half of the responses, they were actively attempting to overcome preconceived notions by doing such things as establishing internships for minority candidates in the teaching profession, supporting teacher-training centers that address such issues as school diversity, and confronting the idea of territorial boundaries within the Collaborations.

What are the advantages of forming Partnerships? These programs faced the challenge of negotiating partners' cultural differences. This study found that breaking down stereotypes and weakening the formulaic thinking that partners had about each other were positive responses to the cultural difference challenge. In fact, a desire to demystify the culture of the other partner was seen as the reason for starting several public/private school partnerships.

Summary of Findings

In this study, it was found that structure influenced the success of public/private school partnerships. Collaborations, the most structured type, had more qualities that contributed to a higher degree of mutuality among members. Collaborations had the most successful environments, fewer restrictions to success, and the most positive responses to those restrictions than Cooperations (in all cases) and Coordinations (in most cases). Collaborations and Coordinations experienced a similar amount of restrictions to their success. The most important characteristic contributing to a successful partnership environment was found to be effective leadership at the top. The most commonly recognized restriction to creating a successful partnership environment was found to be the tension caused by the differences in cultural norms. The most common characteristic effective in offsetting tension created by these differences was the desire to break down pre-existing stereotypes among those coming from diverse backgrounds. Finally, Collaborations were more likely to express the desire to break down barriers and destroy myths about the other partner's environment than the other two partnership types.

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